

# OISE Thesis Guidelines

## Introduction

Graduate studies at OISE is allocated within Division II (Social Sciences) of the University's School of Graduate Studies (SGS). Graduate degrees are granted by the University of Toronto and their requirements derive from University of Toronto policy

A major requirement for the M.A., M.Ed. (Option III), Ph.D., or Ed.D. degree is the development and presentation of a thesis embodying the results of original investigation, conducted by the student, on an approved topic in their major subject. The thesis constitute a contribution to the knowledge of the field and should be appropriate in scope and significance to the degree which the student is seeking

This handbook includes information concerning the formal thesis requirements for graduate degree education. It is designed for use by both faculty and students. Responsibilities of faculty and students are outlined in each section of the guide. It is the student's responsibility, however, to see that all requirements and deadlines are met. This means taking the initiative in arranging meetings with the supervisors as registration, required for the study, fees assessment, scheduling of your graduation and convocation will proceed without complications.

When planning the selection of your supervisor and committee. The first official topic which you must give to your department is on the

## Thesis Supervision

Approval Form, available on the ORSS website under Student Forms. Due dates are as follows:

- x Ed.D., 2-year M.A. and M.Ed. students should submit Thesis Supervision Approval Form by April 1 of the year following a year of required full-time study. If full-time study is not required and if you are studying part-time, it is due after the completion of 2/3 of your required coursework.
- x Ph.D. students must have an approved thesis supervisor, Supervisory Committee, and submit the Thesis Supervision Approval Form by the end of the second year.

These are important deadlines and are designed to enable you to use your coursework and contacts in setting your thesis topic and forming your Supervisory Committee.

It is important to review guidelines at various stages of the process, in case of changes to regulations. If questions arise, please contact your departmental Liaison Officer or the Office of the Registrar and

Student Services. Useful information can also be found in the OISE Bulletin and the School of Graduate Studies Calendar.

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- x Recommendation for Master's Degree Form
- x Non-Exclusive License to Reproduce Theses Form

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## Section 1: Getting Started

### 1.1: Selection/Definition of a Thesis Topic

The range of research areas available to graduate students in education is indicated by the programs, fields, and course offerings within your department. Begin thinking about your thesis topic when you begin your studies here. Your faculty advisor can assist you in selecting courses and defining your thesis topic.

Coursework provides an excellent opportunity to get to know faculty and their areas of expertise, to define and refine your own areas of interest, and to discover research approaches, and methods. You should select a tentative thesis topic or problem as soon as possible, and seek opinions regarding its suitability from your faculty advisor and other members of the faculty. An important consideration in the choice of topic is the availability of an appropriate supervisor within your department.

The library has copies of all OISE theses up to June 2009. Any after that date are on <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/> Looking at some of these will give you an idea of the kind and scope of work that is done at OISE. M.A. and Ph.D. theses typically address the relationship between a theoretical framework and a body of empirical research; M.Ed. (Option III) and Ed.D. theses tend to focus on the application of theory and research to the study or change of professional concerns and practice. Theses vary, however, in many respects; for example, in the emphasis on empirical or theoretical considerations, the use of qualitative or quantitative data, the collection and use of original

### 1.3: Developing the Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal is developed in consultation with a member of the faculty, typically your faculty advisor or a prospective supervisor. Most students write and revise several draft proposals as their thinking evolves and is shaped in interaction with faculty, peers, research, etc. Many departments also offer research seminars which are intended to contribute to this process.

Different departments and supervisors have different approaches to the development and approval of a thesis proposal. It is best to discuss this with your faculty advisor or thesis supervisor. Generally, a thesis proposal includes the following:

- (a) a clear statement of the problem addressed in the study, usually in the form of a question or questions;
- (b) a rationale or justification for the study, in terms of its implications for educational theory and/or practice, i.e., what will this study contribute to the field?



Once the potential composition of the Supervisory Committee has been determined, the proposed members are approached by the thesis supervisor for their agreement. Upon achieving this, the committee is officially formed, its members listed on the Thesis Supervision Approval Form, and approved by the Chair of your home department. It is then submitted to your department. This form also includes the thesis title and signatures of all committee members. Additional materials must be submitted for any Supervisory Committee members requiring the approval of the Chair of the department (see 1.4 “A Note about Appointment to the School of Graduate Studies”). Note: The Thesis Supervision Approval Form is also to be used when making a change to the composition of your Committee or when changing your thesis title.)

The committee may then meet to approve the thesis proposal.

x Thesis Supervision Approval Form

1.7: Securing Approval of the Thesis Proposal

Before you can proceed formally with your thesis research project, you must secure the official approval of your topic, title, and proposal from your Supervisory Committee. Procedures and practices regarding approval for thesis proposals vary from department to department. Some delegate the responsibility entirely to the Supervisory Committee; others require a formal proposal hearing to which faculty who are not members of the Supervisory Committee are invited to critique the proposal. You should learn about the procedures and practices in your home department as early as possible in your program.

The approved Thesis Proposal Abstract Form is submitted to the Office of the Registrar and Student

Individual faculty members “supervise” in different ways. Most prefer to work ~~one~~ with their students on designing the study and on drafts of the thesis until they feel the drafts are solid enough to be seen and critiqued by other committee members. Some seek critical input from other committee members at earlier stages of the writing. You should feel free to seek advice, consultation, and criticism of your ideas, your proposal, and your thesis chapters from all committee members. While your supervisor and committee members (and other faculty) may have considerable input into the development of the project and may wish to steer it in different directions, the thesis project is yours; you must feel committed to it and be prepared to justify it.

The Supervisory Committee acts on behalf of OISE in:

- (a) giving formal approval of the thesis topic and proposal by signing Thesis Supervision Approval Form and by reviewing the Thesis Proposal Abstract Form
- (b) advising, guiding, and supervising the thesis work;
- (c) receiving progress reports and requiring necessary modifications;
- (d) arranging for a seminar presentation where required;
- (e) evaluating the final draft of an M.A. or M.Ed. (Option III) thesis;
- (f) recommending the readiness of a Ph.D. or Ed.D. thesis for the Final Oral Examination.

Your Supervisory Committee will help you to decide which research skills will be appropriate for your research, including language skills, knowledge of statistics, or technological ability

Normally, your full committee meets in order to take formal action at points (a), (e), and (f) above.



thesis must be numbered in accordance with the OISE Guidelines. Page Orientation – portrait, reading across the 8.5 inch dimension. (See Appendix B)

Academic Style Guide Consult your academic style guide for: titles, indents, the arrangement and numbering of lists, footnotes, endnotes, tables, figures, and references/bibliography, etc. Bibliographic references must be consistent with your style guide (Appendix A). Again, note that OISE formatting requirements overrule academic style guides (Appendix B).

### *2.2 a) Use of French Language for Theses*

The thesis should normally be written in English but, on petition by the department in which the student is enrolled, French may be permitted.

When the Supervisory Committee is formed, the Chair of the department should submit a request seeking permission for the thesis to be written in French, including a rationale for the request and verification that all members of the Supervisory Committee have agreed that the thesis be written in French. If you have permission to submit a thesis in French, consult with the staff of the Centre for Franco-Ontarian Studies of OISE for recommendations regarding appropriate style guides and dictionaries.

### *2.2 b) Non-Sexist Language*

Students are required to employ non-sexist language in their theses and other papers. For guidance:

American Psychological Association. (2001).  
5th ed. Washington, D.C.: The Association, 2001.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. (1985).  
Margrit Eichler and Jeanne Lapointe. 1985.

Marilyn Schwartz and the Task Force on 32 10eaMh6(s)-11 23 >>BDC -0..3cc0 (ui]TJ /TT0 1 3J /TT0 1,  
(d. W)-6 (a)4 (a)-6l Canguage

## 2.2 d) Major Reasons for Rejecting a Thesis

Theses that do not conform to the guidelines will not be accepted by the School, and the student's graduation will be deferred. Theses have been rejected by the National Library for the following reasons:

- x Presence of substantial copyrighted material that is not accompanied by a letter of authorization from the copyright owner
- x Missing or incorrectly numbered pages.
- x "Non-Exclusive License to Reproduce Theses Form" is missing, altered, unsigned, or signed by a person other than the author.

## 2.3: Off-Campus Research

If it is necessary for you to pursue full-time thesis research off-campus, you must make a formal request for permission to do so well before the expected date of departure. Request forms are available on [oise.utoronto.ca/orss/Student\\_Forms](http://oise.utoronto.ca/orss/Student_Forms) from your department and should be returned to the Registrars' Office after completion. Please note that only in exceptional circumstances is permission granted for off-campus research during the required period of full-time, on-campus study.

Master's Students Proceed to Section 3.1

## 2.4: Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Requirements

All Ph.D. students at OISE, as well as Ed.D. students in some departments and programs must fulfill this requirement. Ed.D. students should inquire in your department.

Procedures and schedules for Comprehensive Examinations vary from one department to another. Please consult your own department for details.

Some general points:

1. Completion of the Comprehensive Examination is on a pass/fail basis. If a student fails the Comprehensive Examination on the first attempt, one additional attempt may be allowed and normally must be retaken ( r)d7( m)-2 (us)-1 (t)-2 ( b)-4 (i)-6 (n-8 2 (l)-2 (l)-.002 Tc(s)-5 (l)-.002 Tc(s)

### 3.1: M.A. and M.Ed. (Option III) Students: Submission of Thesis

You must submit the thesis to your thesis supervisor and other committee member(s) for examination.

When all requirements for the degree have been met, including any changes or corrections required by your committee, your thesis supervisor will forward the “Recommendation for Master’s Degree Form” to the Office of the Registrar and Student Services. This must be done by September for conferral of the degree at the Fall Convocation ceremony; by January for conferral of the degree at the March Meeting of the Governing Council (in absentia); and by April for conferral of the degree at the Spring Convocation ceremony. For deadlines, [see www.oise.utoronto.ca/orss/Important\\_Dates.html](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/orss/Important_Dates.html)

By



Appendix B:

Sample of Title Page Layout  
(Note: Spacing is approximate)

~~1111~~

THESIS TITLE  
ADDITIONAL LINES IF NECESSARY

~~11~~<sub>2</sub>

by

~~11~~<sub>2</sub>

Jane Ann Doe

~~11~~

The title page of your thesis counts as roman numeral "i", but the page number does not show.

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements  
for the degree ~~of~~  
Graduate Department ~~of~~  
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education  
University of Toronto

~~11~~<sub>4</sub>

© Copyright by Jane Ann Doe ~~of~~

~~11~~

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MAJOR TITLE OF YOUR THESIS  
 SUBTITLE, IF ANY  
 “Master” or “Doctor” of (*state degree*) (*state year of graduation/convocation*)  
 Your Full Name  
 Department of (*state department name, omit OISE*)  
 University of Toronto

### Abstract

The text for your Abstract begins here (doctoral = 350 words, master’s = 150 words), double line (2.0) spacing. The page number is “ii” and positioned bottom centre. The heading information and the word ‘Abstract’ are not included in the word count. Symbols, as well as foreign words and phrases, must be clearly and accurately displayed. Do not include graphs, charts, tables, or illustrations in the Abstract.

### Thesis Abstract

x Title Page is followed by Abstract which includes *some* title page information, as shown above

x Abstract is number “ii”, bottom centre

x Margin Minimums: Top, Bottom = 0.75”; Left = 1.25”; Right = 0.75”,      *Recommended: Top, Bottom = 1”; Left, Right = 1.25”*

x Font Size Minimum: 10 points or 10 to 15 characters per inch      *Recommended: Times New Roman 12*

## Appendix C:

### Doctoral Students and Their Supervisors

1. Have you selected a research area which is compatible with the personnel resources of the department? Is your supervisor the best person to supervise your research? Is your Supervisory Committee composed of graduate faculty who are active in your field of research?
2. Do you fully understand the requirements of your doctoral program with regard to course load, comprehensive examination, thesis proposal, thesis document, and required timelines for completing each component of your degree? Are you aware of the expectations of your department/Supervisory Committee at each of these stages? Have you established a detailed timetable, is it compatible with normal completion time of doctoral degrees? Are you meeting these deadlines?
3. Have you clearly defined your research topic? Are you aware of the possible limitations to your research? Can the research be completed within the time of your doctoral degree? Will your research make an original contribution to knowledge?
4. Are you maintaining regular contact with your supervisor and members of your Supervisory Committee? Are they aware of the progress you have made or difficulties you have encountered in your research? Do you submit an annual report on your progress to your committee for inclusion in the departmental files? Does this report list any deviations from your original timetable or research area?
5. Do you make and observe clearly stated arrangements for the submission and return of your own work?
6. Do you submit written drafts of your work at regular intervals for comment by the committee on your work?
7. If you are working towards a deadline, are you allowing sufficient time for your supervisor to read

## Checklist for Supervisors

1. Are your research interests compatible? Are you going to be available for the period of the dissertation? If not, what arrangements have you made? Do you maintain regular contact with your student? Are you accessible and responsive to the student's needs? Are you providing



Appendix D:

Copyright Checklist

Confused? Confusion and uncertainty are endemic in copyright law. The object of this checklist is to help guide you in finding a clearer and more accurate trail of possible copyright owners.

Your thesis is fundamentally “academic” but once it is available online and published with the National Library and you make it available for sale, it takes on a different characteristic and you therefore need to exercise greater caution about copyright.

The best way to address “fair use” of material in your thesis is by evaluating the following five factors where copyright infringement occurs:

- Does your thesis contain multi-authored papers or co-authored chapters with you as the primary author?
- Has any chapter in your thesis been previously published as a paper in a journal?
- Does your thesis (appendices and chapters) contain questionnaires, maps, published tests, surveys, graphs, illustrations or pictures in the form in which they were originally published elsewhere?
- Does your thesis contain any quotations from pre-existing materials that extend for more than one page?
- Does your thesis contain reproductions of complete poems or parts of journal articles, even if the work is short?

***If you have answered yes to any of the above, then you must obtain written authorization to produce the material from the copyright owner (e.g., journal publisher and/or co-authors).***

Copyrightable  
© - No



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For further information and assistance, see:

<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/TSpaceSubmission.aspx>

T-Space: <https://tspadlibrary.utoronto.ca/mydspace>

Note that your authorization to submit to the SGS Theses collection ends with approval of your ETD. However, you may continue as a T-Space user to access any of the collections, including the Theses collection. You are also welcome to register in T-Space to be a contributor to other collections.

Reminder: you must submit the following to the OISE Office of the Registrar and Student Services and SGS:

- Restrict Thesis Release Date form dated and signed by the Chair of your department if you intend to put an embargo on the release date of your ETD.
- Master's students only: a Recommendation for Master's Degree Form from your Thesis Committee
- Doctoral students only: written confirmation (letter or email) from your supervisor (for minor corrections) or the convenor of your modification committee (for minor modifications), that your thesis is in final form and approved

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